

**Bentonville High School**  
**Advanced Placement Psychology**  
**2012 – 2013 Teacher Information Sheet**

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**Note to Parents and Guardians:** This letter is meant to give you an overview of the basics of this course. If you have any questions this letter does not answer please e-mail me at school, give me a call at my school number, or check out my Wikispaces site. THANK YOU FOR THE PRIVILEGE OF TEACHING YOUR CHILD!!

**The Course:** Advanced Placement Psychology is a full-year course designed to give students an extensive introduction to the science of psychology as well as an opportunity to earn college credit from most colleges and universities. A list of topics will be provided to each student, but some of my broad objectives are that ALL students will...

- Exemplify the *scientific mindset*; to develop a healthy skepticism without becoming cynical.
- Develop a broad knowledge of a wide variety of topics in psychology, including it's history as a science, and its various perspectives and theories explaining behavior and mental processes.
- Be able to design a basic research study using scientific research methods.
- Be able to describe, analyze, and draw conclusions about the various phenomena that psychology studies.
- Develop a love for the study of psychology in general and learning in particular.

**Expectations and Practices:** I only have one EXPECTATION when you come to and participate in class...

***Be RESPONSIBLE***

This is vitally important since so much of how I teach centers around cooperative learning and student accountability. Below are a few of the PRACTICES I will emphasize to ensure we are all responsible...

- *Enthusiasm* (ready and excited to learn)
- *Cooperation* (do your part, let others do theirs)
- *Attentive Listening* (make eye contact with the speaker, paraphrase what was said)
- *Intelligent Speech* (use descriptive words: e.g. "That's unintelligent!", rather than "That's stupid!")

**Assignments and Assessments:** Students in this course earn their grades based on overall points. When determining a course letter grade we follow the standard grading scale of...

A = 90-100%    B = 80-89%    C = 70-79%    D = 60-69%    F = (Not going to happen!!)

As for how much weight is given to each grade, I follow the general District grading practices and procedures for student assessment in Advanced Placement courses...

- Unassisted Work – 80% (Unit Exams, Diagnostic Quizzes)
- Assisted Work – 20% (In-Class Writing Prompts, Notebook Pages, Vocabulary)

I strive to stay within District guidelines while making sure no one assignment will doom any student. It should be noted, however, that Unit Exam grades will constitute up to 50% of a student's overall grade each semester. Also, students will have a tentative schedule of major exams and assignments for each semester along with proposed topics for each class period. The notes, resources and assignments for each unit and topic will be posted on my Wikispaces site (<http://millerpsychap.wikispaces.com>).

***\*\* A NOTE About On-Line Resources:*** Since this is a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Grant classroom, and because of the advent of excellent on-line instructional and assessment tools, some instruction and assessment will be engaged via on-line resources. This will generally occur OUTSIDE of the classroom. If you have no Internet access at home please make arrangements to use resources access points provided at school. \*\*

**Needed Materials:** Each student will be issued *Psychology, 8<sup>th</sup> Edition* by David Myers as the standard textbook. Though readings will be assigned from the text, only the following items are expected to be brought to class EVERY DAY...

- Pen AND pencil, and notebook paper
- Colored Pencils
- Three-ring binder (MUST have since I will give hand outs from time to time) – NO EXCEPTIONS!

We will also be making brains out of Play-Doh during the Biological Psychology Unit, so you will need to bring a *four pack of regular-sized Play-Doh*. I will remind the students to bring starting two weeks before the project occurs.

**Homework / Study Work:** Nearly all work that I require students to do is *study work*. Engaging in *study work* requires twenty (20) OR MORE minutes EACH night during the week and involves reviewing of class notes, reading the text, and completing “Connections” pages. Student “Connections” pages, frequent writing assignments, and Diagnostic quizzes will provide evidence that this *study work* is being done.

**Tardies:** A word about being late: DON'T BE (okay, that's two words). If the door is closed when you arrive and you do not have a plausible reason (i.e. valid note) excusing you, you are tardy. Consequences are assigned for each tardy according to the BHS Student Handbook.

**Attendance:** The BHS Student Handbook states that students who miss more than fifteen (15) minutes of a class period will be counted absent. Those who are more than five minutes late are considered *truant*, unless a valid written excuse is presented. Work missed because of truancy automatically receives a zero. For other attendance issues please refer to the BHS Student Handbook.

**Make-Up Work:** Make Up Work is handled on an *individual* basis. I use the basic guidelines set out by the BHS Student Handbook, which states that the student is responsible for obtaining any missed work from the teacher. Essentially, in concurrence with an absence each student can expect that...

- Class notes and most in-class illustrations will be posted to the appropriate page on my Wikispaces site. Since ALL text reading will be known ahead of time, students are expected to stay current with reading as able.
- *ALL assigned work and assessments MUST be completed!* Assignments due are expected to be turned in the class period the student returns from his/her absence. Diagnostic Quizzes and Unit Exams may not be taken until the requisite work is completed.
- The deadline for making up a Unit Exam will be by the next seminar that is within the same number of class periods that was missed. (For instance, if a student misses a Monday exam the exam must be made up by Thursday's seminar.) Credit for the exam may be reduced made up after this deadline. Missing the class prior to the exam WILL NOT exempt the student from taking the exam on time.
- Students that miss school because of truancy MAY make up work that was missed, pending approval from the student's SLC discipline principal. The grade for this work will be reduced from the maximum possible.

**Late Work:** Any work is considered late if it is turned in after the due date. As stated above, *ALL assigned work and assessments MUST be completed*. Zeros are NOT acceptable! That stated, late work will garner reduced credit unless the student can show ample reason for the work being late.

**Extra Help:** See me on an individual basis about coming in before or after school or during Seminar. But, PLEASE, if you need help, SEE ME!! Extra tutoring during Seminar will be required for students who are not improving as expected.

**Final Thoughts:** All of these requirements and procedures are in place so that students can LEARN at the level each desires. So settle in, have fun, and give it everything you've got!

Sincerely,

Derek Miller